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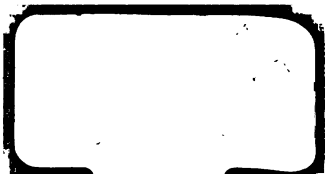
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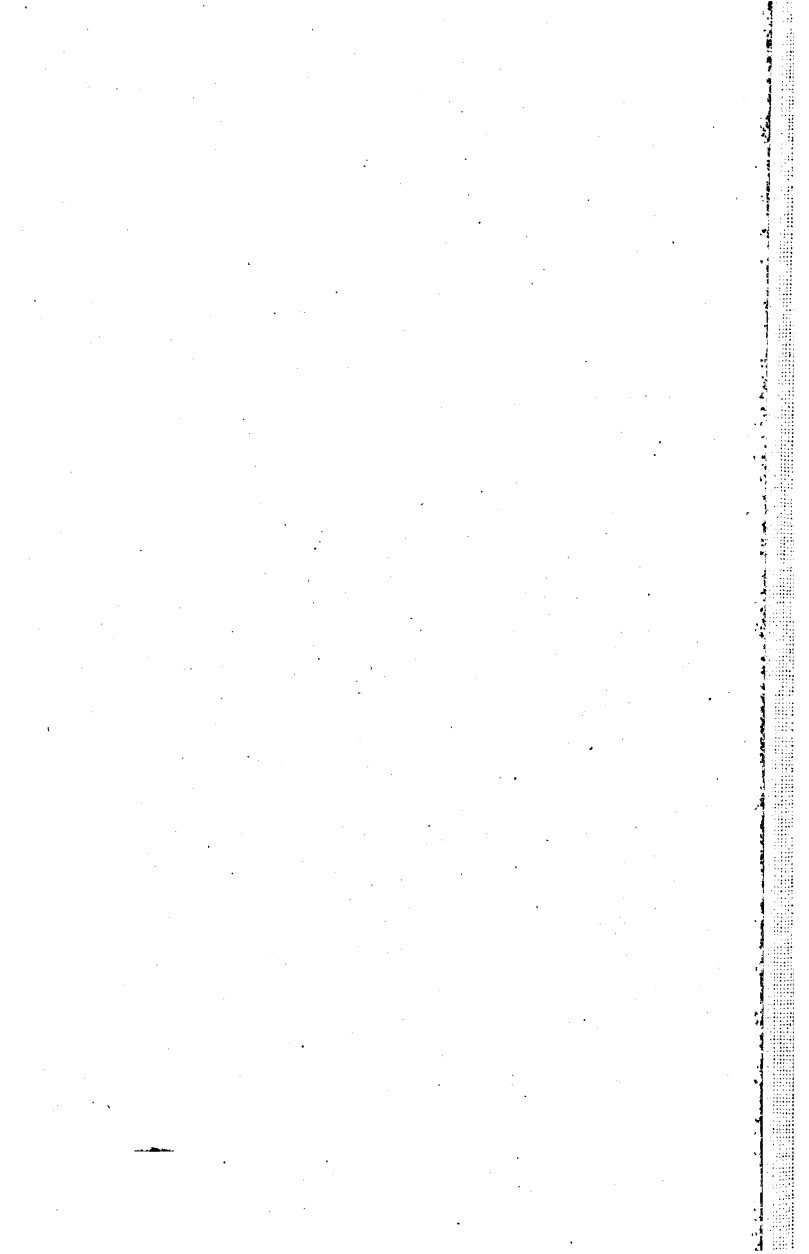
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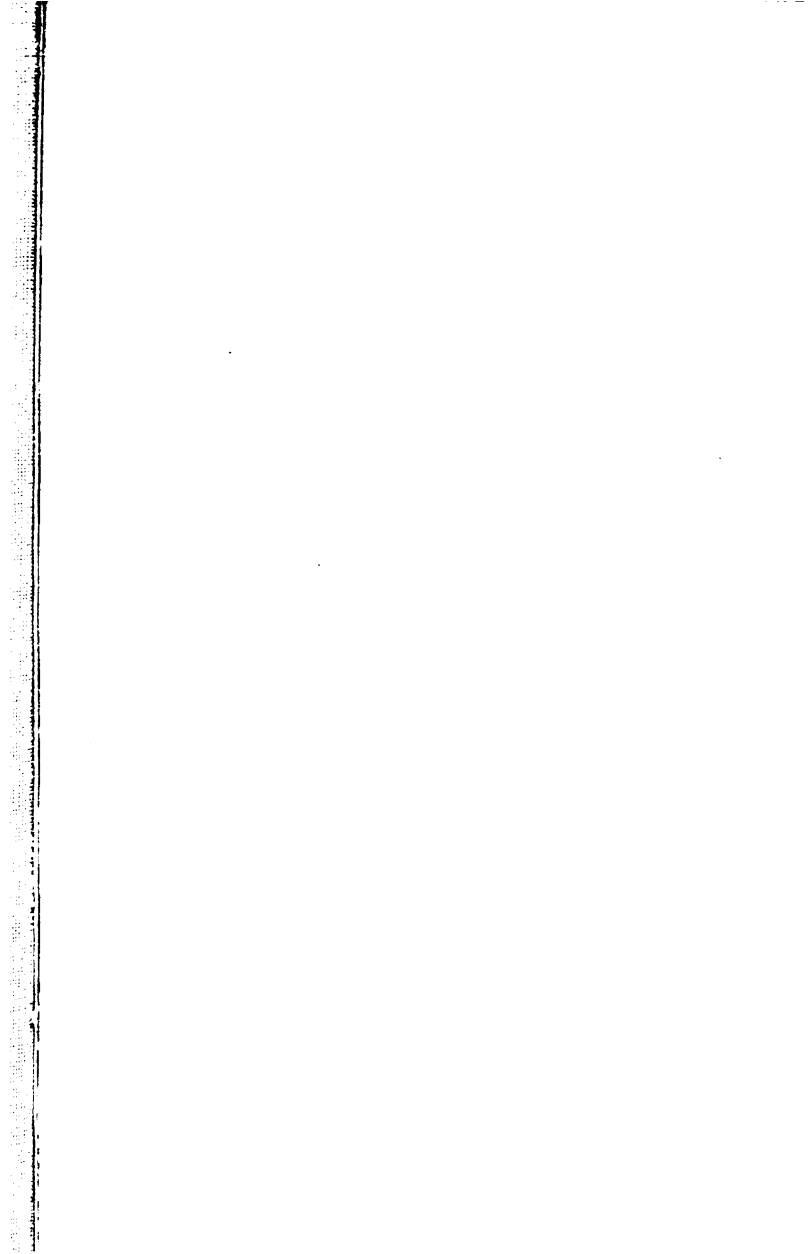
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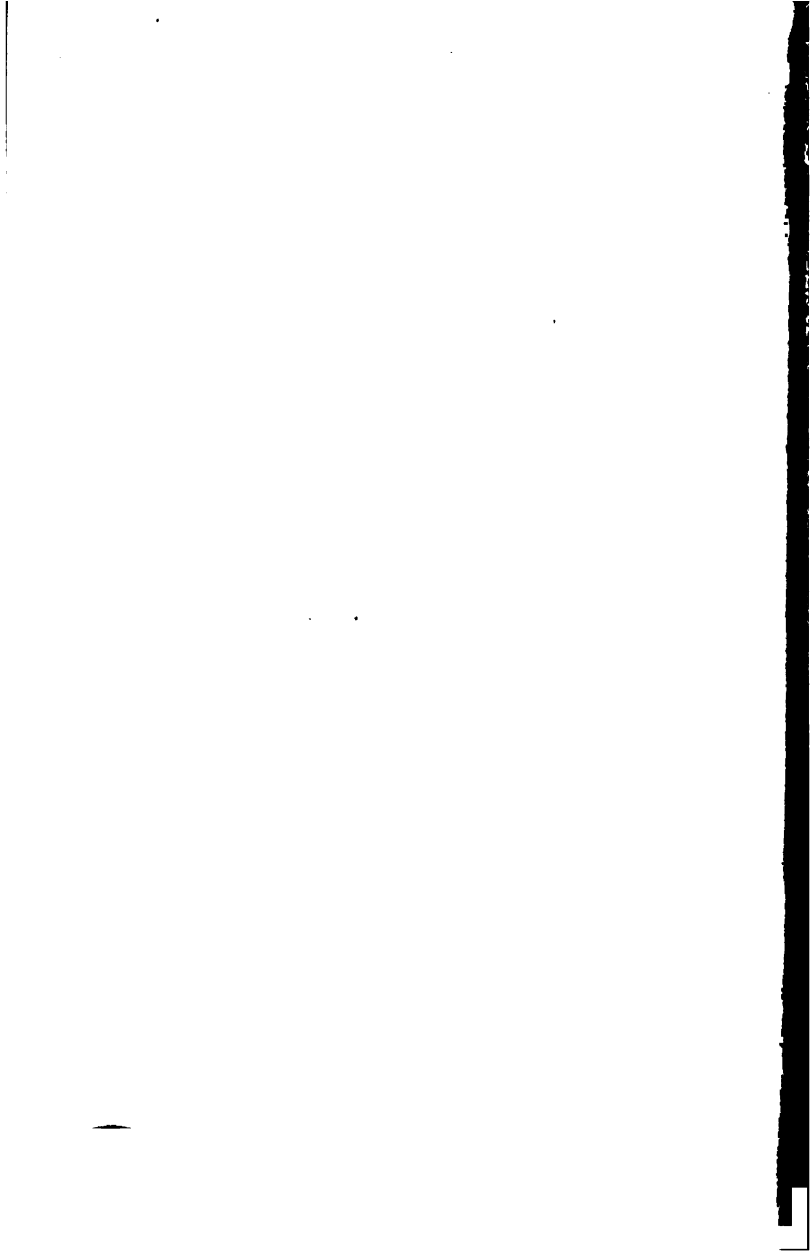
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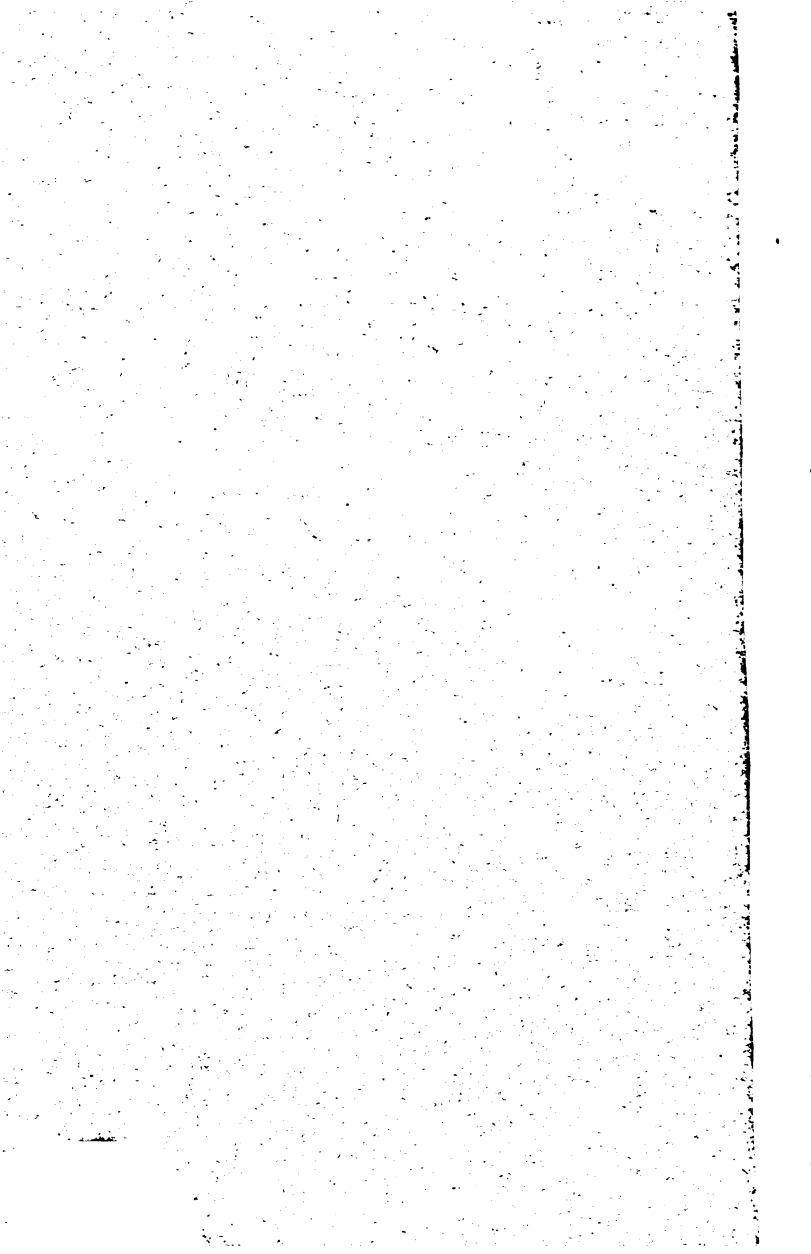






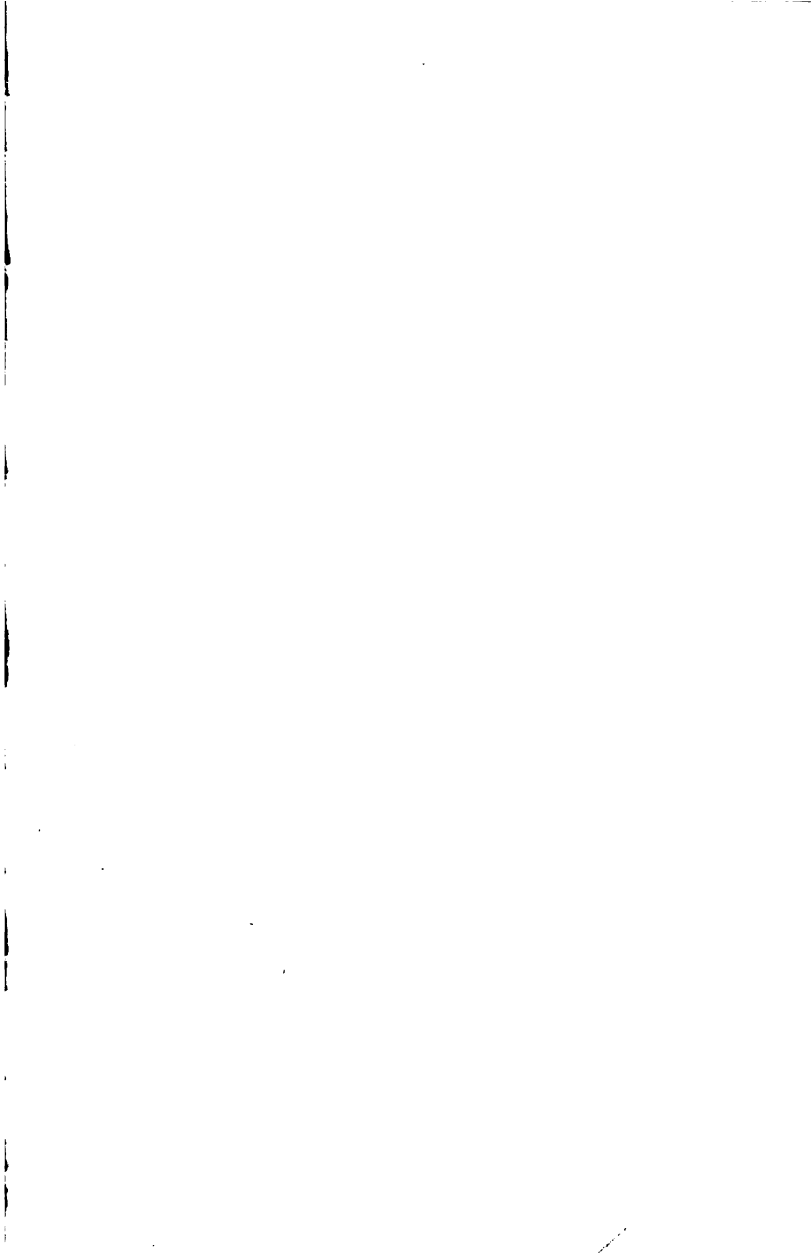
At the Gates of the Century

By Harry Lyman Koopman



(Koopman)
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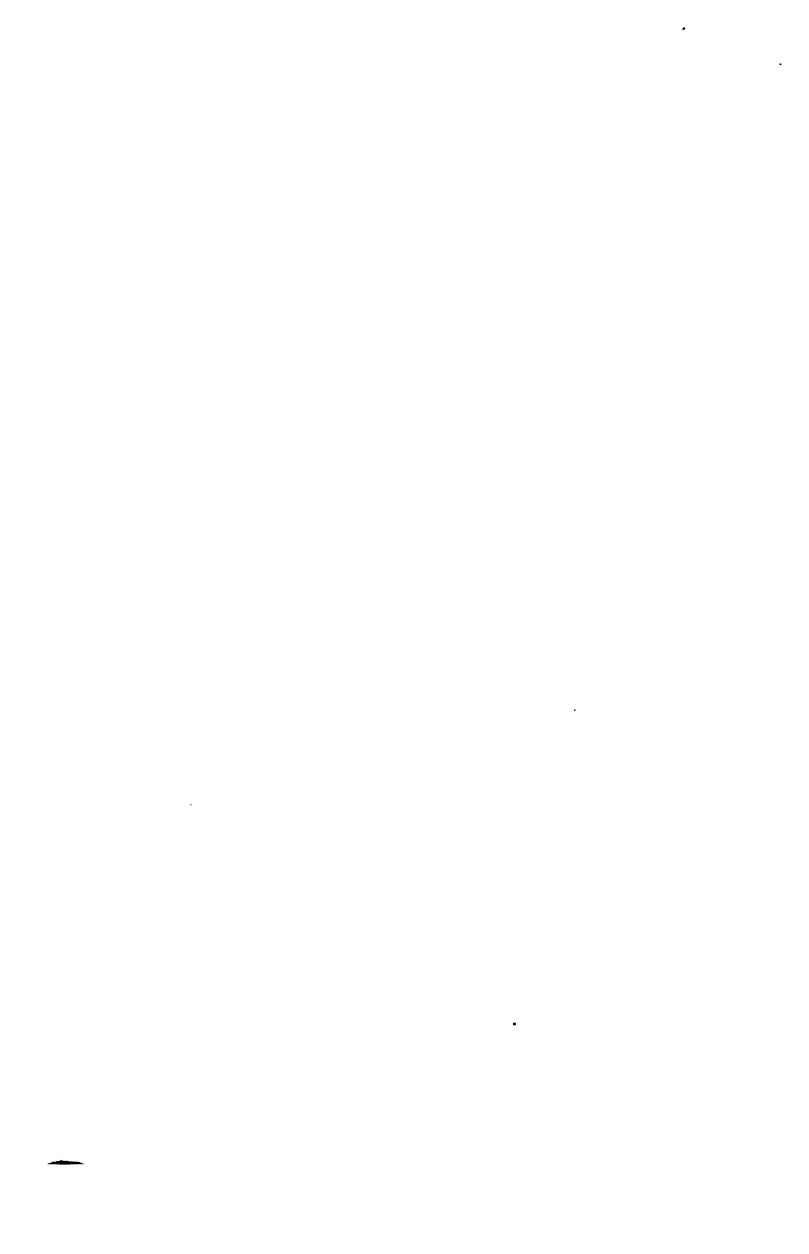
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KOOPMAN
POETICAL WORKS

IV
AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY



AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

BY
HARRY LYMAN KOOPMAN

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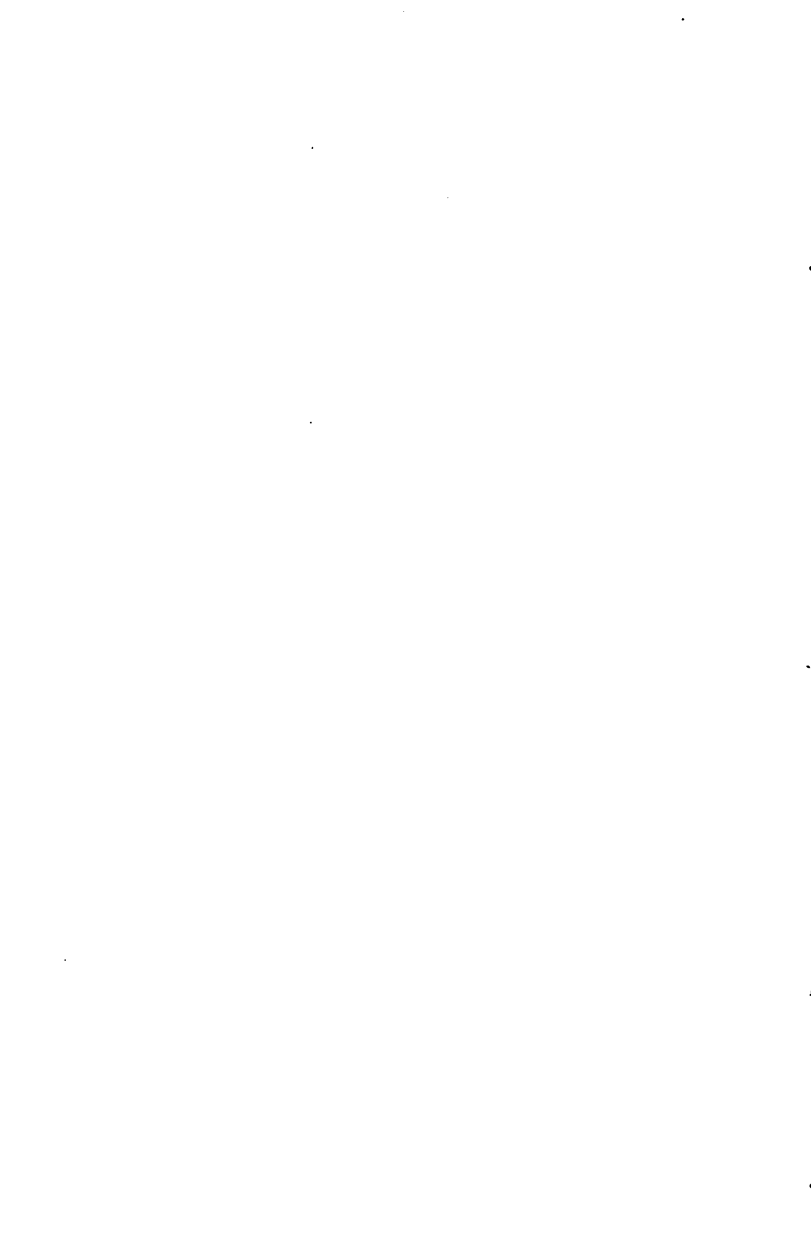
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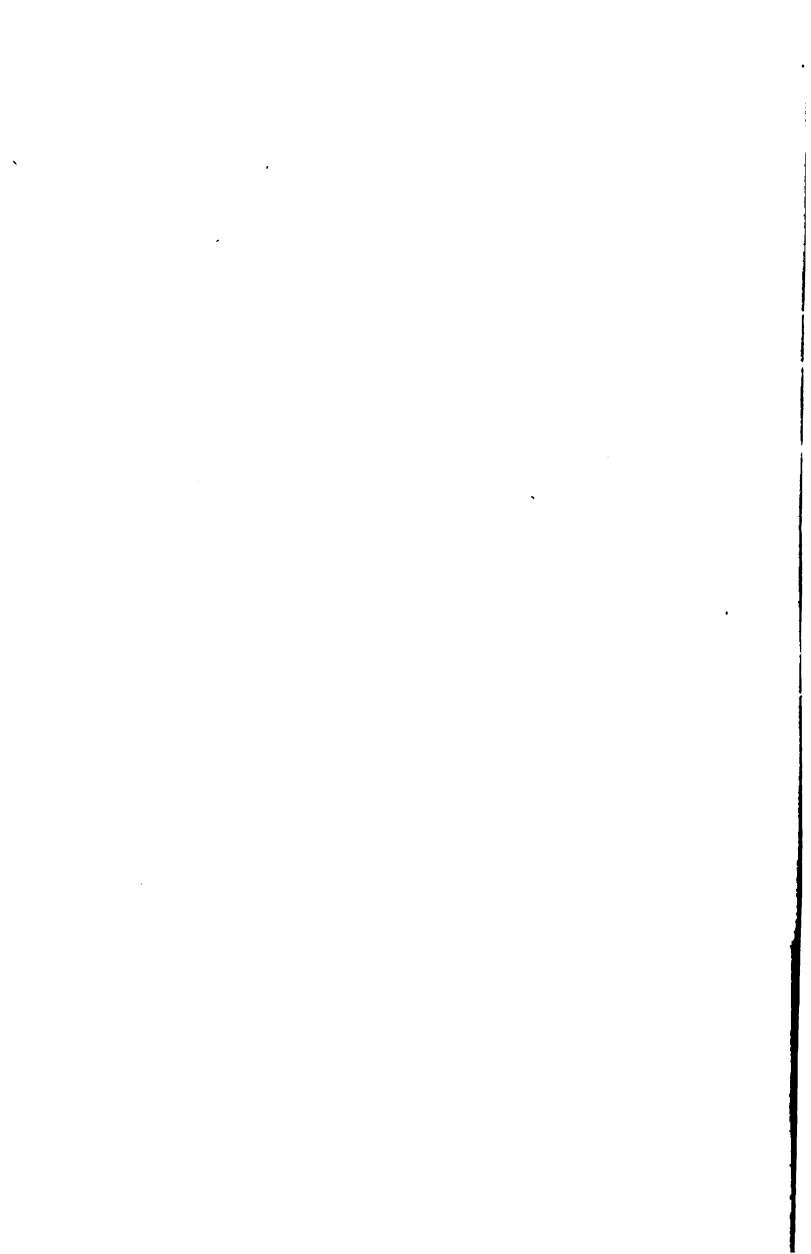
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To
ALBERT COLBY GETCHELL
*In Commemoration of a Friendship
Now in its Thirtieth Year
This Book
Is Affectionately Inscribed*



AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY



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AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

STILL the Sphinx, with fateful riddle, offers life or death to men:

“Living, can men live as brothers; dying, shall they live again?”

But the smile of slow derision, that till now her features wore,

Fades in trembling as the Answer sounds her doom for evermore,

Saying, “Men shall live as brothers, even now their hands unite;”

Saying, “Men shall live hereafter; lo! the graves grow filled with light.”

All around us, louder, clearer, through the discords of to-day,

Swells the harmony uprising that shall sweep their strife away;

That shall blend our jangling noises, which on patient Heaven jar,

In a flame of choric splendor that shall crown our earth a star.

We are wraiths that haunt earth's morning, we shall pass when breaks her sleep;

You, our glorious aftercomers, we but sow for you to reap.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

You shall walk as living children of a living universe
Where we creep in doubt and sorrow, shadowed by
the mortal curse.
For the sob of night's denial dies below the night
which flies,
And the blithe-heart Yea of morning laughs through
all the kindling skies.

1900.

LE LION COUCHANT *

Camel's Hump, from Burlington

MAJESTIC lion, stretched before the gate
Of Morning, where all day thou keepest guard,
Nor slumberest when Midnight and her starred
Empanoplied battalions pass in state,
Still dost thou loom in heaven grim as great,
Save when the tender Morning hath unbarred
Her purple portals; or when, o'er the scarred
Sad earth, the Sunset smiles to bid thee wait.
Crowned with the snows, the thunder at thy feet,
Thou lookest down upon the centuries,
August, immortal! while below thee fleet
Man's generations, and their agonies,
Raptures, hopes, fears, defeats, and triumphs greet
Thy changeless calm with daily new surprise.

May 25, 1888.

* From this point onward the poems are arranged substantially in order of time.

PROPORTION

PROPORTION

'T is distance lends *proportion* to the view,
And dwarfs all Asia to a suffering Jew.

KEATS

His name was writ in water — and the dint
Of pity froze the fickle waves to flint.

His name was writ in water — and has gone
To every shore the wide sea touches on.

TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

THOU hast the antique beauty that slays men
With utter longing. Such Greek Helen wore,
Which drew a thousand ships the blue sea o'er,
With all their hosts who sailed not back again.
O blossom face, uptilted to the ken
Of dazzled heaven! What were stars before
Shut their weak eyes; the blanched moon shines
no more;
Noon, when thou steppest forth, was night till then.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

Nay, words becloud thee! Yet, if I but might
Depict thy beauty as it shines on me,
All after ages would extol its light,
And honor me forever, praising thee.
Oh, happy lot, to live in death's despite,
Linked to thy beauty's immortality!

BROWNELL

NONE e'er like him from war's resounding thong
Loosed the lean, wrath-winged, grief-barbed shaft
of song.

SUCCORY

So, Sweet, the spring has gone, for thou art here,
Eying the morning out of countenance
With long-lashed baby-stare of heavenlier blue.
Nay, never shut thine eyes; thou needst not fear;
The poets now are dumb; the languorous June
Hath calmed the springtime fervor in their blood —
June, and the mockery of the ribald throng
That never felt their blood leap with the spring.
But thou art wondering at my silence? Ah!
Thou knewest not thy sisters of the wood,
Whose beauty long since robbed me of all praise.
Yet their praise men heard coldly, while all earth

SUCCORY

Sang chorus to my song; and who will hear
Of thee amid the summer silences?
But, Blue-eye, though I sing thee not, my heart
Shall weave thy beauty into songs of love
That men shall hear and praise and know not why,
But thou and I know, only I and thou.
Alas for hearts that flower not with the year!
Alas for them that heed not the report
The poet brings from Flower-land! None can write
A song of seasons for all years. No year
But hath its own new beauty. Every spring,
A fresh creation, blossoms from God's hand,
And asks its own new song. Sweet unsung, blue
Firstling of summer's splendor, teach men this:
Beauty lies gladly open to all eyes;
But he that scorns it hides it from himself,
As now the haughty sun, disdaining thee,
Hath shrivelled thee into a dusty weed,
With no hint of the heaven in thy heart.

VISIONS OF BEAUTY

WHY was it given to me
Beauty in all things to see?
My brother, my sister, my friend,
May go to the world's end
And their travels be not so fruitly
With sights of heavenly beauty

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

As my walk day by day
Along the familiar way,
Up and down to my work;
For the visions, the visions that lurk
In the human faces I meet,
In the trees that shelter the street,
In the sun and the sky over all,
In the rains and the snows that fall,
In the promise or presage that peers
In every change of the year's,
But fairest and rarest to me
In the human faces I see!

MUSIC

THE CREATION

GOD spake, and the revolving spheres
In silent awe enringed his throne;
God smiled, and on Heaven's ravished ears
Their praise outbrake in Music's tone.

THE FASTNESS

Hearts locked and barred in walls of steel,
That laugh all speech to scorn,
Melt with their ramparts at the peal
Of Music's wonder-horn.

MUSIC

THE TORCH-RACE

The torch of Love Speech onward brought,
Then, fainting, yielded it to Song,
From whom the drooped flame Music caught,
And, world-illuming, swept along.

AUGUST HYLLESTED

Think not my fingers taught the scale
That music which your souls hath stirred.
No, they but tore aside the veil
Of silence, and let Heaven be heard.

THE EPIGRAMMATIST

A FREE lance upon Error's flank,
He fought its bravest one by one,
With sudden thrust that flashed and sank,
And needed second none.

GREETING

OUR tiresome journey neared its end;
One looked and cried, "There waits my friend!"
So lovely is the world! But how of those
Whom no friend greets at any journey's close?

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

RECOLLECTION

FOUR years ago at this blossom-time
I caught a glimpse, from the flying train,
Of a cherry-bush in its mantling prime;
To-day I saw it so again.

It thrilled my heart with the same delight
I had felt before on that vain pursuit.—
How many blossoms must bloom and blight
For one that ripens into fruit!

GEORGE PERKINS MARSH

On finishing the catalogue of his library

At length I lay my weary pen aside,
Which now has traced out all the tangled maze,
The labyrinth of speech and thought, whose ways,
To me so sore, to him were smooth and wide,
And rich with prospects unto most denied;
To him, the scholar, crowned with Europe's
praise,
From Hecla unto Etna's answering blaze,
Who loved all books, but Nature's deepliest eyed.
He sat with kings, greater in all but name,
An uncrowned sovereign from the kingless West,
To triflers cold, how warm to the oppressed!

GEORGE PERKINS MARSH

And when amid the Etrurian bowers death came
To round his eighty years of lore and fame,
Not Vallombrosa bore so calm a breast.

May, 1890.

THE POET'S HOME

WHERE beauty is, there is mine Arcady,
My vale of Tempe, my Parnassus mount,
My crystal Hippocrene, my Castaly,
My grove Egerian and Bandusian fount;
Mine Avon and mine Arno there I find
Where beauty is, in nature and the mind.

Then spake a voice and answered: "Was it this
I sought thee for, and gave thee eyes to see,
And ears to hear, and nostrils that not miss
The fragrance of the lightest touch of me,
Left in my passing upon grass and flower;
And all to share with others gave thee power ?

"Build thou thy home where beauty dwelleth not;
Where city smokes blot out the earth and sky,
And souls of men faint for they know not what,
Which thou canst from thine inward store supply.
Art thou a lamp, and burnest but by day ?
For shame! The dark demands thy guiding ray."

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE FIRST-BORN

May 27, 1890

THE anxious winter wore away,
The tree-tops lit their sacred flame;
At last, mid apple-blooms of May,
Our longed-for darling came.

Like the glad month which brought thee, Dear,
I pray that thou to earth mayst bring
The life renewed, the better cheer,
The hope and heart of spring.

THE MINSTREL

HE fell on days when song was dumb,
All but the hurdy-gurdy's thrum,
Which rumbled on so loud and long
That none might hear his slender song.
At last all ceased, the low and loud,
And then with wonder heard the crowd
A soft strain, dying on the air,
Of music so unearthly rare,
So ravishing, bewildering sweet,
That, if a man could but repeat
One echo of that vanished sound,
As master he was robed and crowned.

THE RILL

THE RILL

A RILL that leaps from the rock
With a silver flash into light,
Then sinks with staggering shock
Into the hemlocks' night.

Such, with its moment of mirth,
Sparkles my slender strain;
So finds, 'neath the shadows of earth,
A fragrance haunting its pain.

MOUNT WASHINGTON

As visited by King Og

WE trundled up Mount Washington o'er many a
cog a-jog,
And looked on Lake Umbagog, Memphremagog,
Magog, Gog.

THE MODEL

HAIR like night after the lightning's blaze,
Cheeks of snow with hope of dawn alive,
Eyes that are midnight and its myriad rays,
A form and step that Juno's cult revive.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

AUTUMN AND THE POET

"O SINGER, where is thy voice
That sang me greetings of old?
When before hast thou failed to rejoice
At the sight of my gems and gold?"

"Ah! truly," answered he,
"But all things now are new;
What should I sing, for what can I see
But my baby's eyes of blue!"

TIME AND SPACE

Hymn God eternal, and at once you chime
With hearts of worshippers in every clime;
But hail God infinite, you shear away
All attributes to which the soul can pray.

POETRY

SOMETHING burned within my heart;
Words, like water, gave the smart
Exquisite relief, and then
Fiercer burned the fire again.

POET TO MUSICIAN

POET TO MUSICIAN

I ENVY thee,
Blithe lark that in the blue hast light and scope,
While I in stubble grope.
'T is much for me
If these blunt wings may ease my leaden feet,
Without the hope to greet
Like thee the dreaming dawn.
I envy thee, but, while thy song I hear,
My wings too beat the buoyant atmosphere;
I put thy nature on.

THE VIOLIN

ARIEL yearning at Miranda's side
For the humanity to him denied.

REVIEWS

WHENCE comes your skill from song's vast mines
The richest ore to choose?
I simply gather up the lines
Condemned in the reviews.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE HERALD

"HURRAH, we win!" the spent Greek runner cried,
And then (what more remained to live for?) died.

THE ENGRAVER

NOTHING but black and white in a world of color
to work with!
Ah! but when I have wrought who shall notice the
lack?

CONSISTENCY

CONSISTENCY, with right men call thee jewel,
For many-faced thou art;
But all their flames are fed by the one fuel
That forms thy constant heart.

THE PROMISE OF SPRING

I STOOD before my lofty maple-tree,
A dome of coral in the spring's green sea,
And looked with pleasure on its budding leaves,

THE PROMISE OF SPRING

And thought: At birth the Norn our weird-cloth
weaves;
We cannot throw it off. A half-year hence,
When the brown earth is breatht with frosty scents,
This maple shall fulfil the spring's behest;
In crimson then, but ah! more glorious, drest.

AFTER COMMENCEMENT

THE morning mist enwraps thee like a dream,—
The river's warm breath whitened by the dawn;
Still as deep sleep, the elms about thy lawn
Mix with the vapor; on the veiled stream
The sliding, slumberous ripples roll and gleam.
The morn shall wake; winds woo and sunbeams
fawn
To rouse thee, vainly, in thy rest withdrawn,
Where summer's moons of quiet reign supreme.

Meanwhile the woods are storing up their dyes,
The clematis twines wreaths of later snow,
The sumacs drain the sunset's fieriest glow,
The ferns catch every sweetest breath that flies;
And all, that when thou opest again thine eyes,
Autumn's romance may lure as long ago.

Colby College, July 2, 1891.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE TWO VOICES

Two voices since my spirit's life awoke
Have called to it with power: the voice of those
High Priests of Consolation who disclose
The real idealized; which men invoke
From Chaucer's lips and Wordsworth's, and which
spoke
Living and neighborly from Longfellow's.
This when I heard, no dullest weed that grows
In field or heart but into fragrance broke.
But mightier, more strenuous, the voice
By Spenser, Milton, Shelley, Emerson,
Adown the thrilling centuries clear-blown,
The ideal making real to men's choice,
Arousing men in struggle to rejoice; —
Prophets flame-tongued of Inspiration.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

On the departure of the Sauveur School of Languages

ON us, to whom the Alps and Apennines
Deny their grandeur, and the Pyrenees
O'ertop the bluster of Biscayan seas
Without our waking vision, and the Rhine's
Mirrored romance round cliff and ruin twines,
But all as dim as the far Cyclades

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

Enfolding Delos isle; on us, from these
Wide Sundered, with what charm your coming
shines!
So, at your going, we cry: Come again!
And glad our ears with speech that Weimar
knew,
Clear notes which tell how Gallic pulses leap,
Music that haunts the sad Campagnan plain,
Or tones which first o'er the Bahaman blue
Called, "Land!" and it was morning on the
deep.

Burlington, Vt., August 13, 1891.

MOUNT MANSFIELD

A SCROLL whose every line wraps deeper lore
Than mouldering tomes whereon bleared scholars
pore.

JOHN KEATS

FIVE brief years in a boy's unrounded life,
Three harvests of the soul, then chilling death; —
And the perspective of our English song,
With its millennial sweep from Grendel's bane,
Past Hamlet's puzzled will, even onward down
To the freed Titan, must be drawn anew.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

SHELLEY'S PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

“UNBOUND, for who would bind it ? ” the perplexed
And sneering critics of the poet cried,
Whose son saw England's scholarship divide
Over a doubtful comma in the text.

SELF-SACRIFICE

“IT is more blessed to give than receive,” Paul
quoted the Master;
Wrongly, I deem, for are they not equal in curse or
in blessing ?
Blest in a benefit rendered with joy to taker and
giver,
As when from happy breasts a happy infant is
nourished;
Curst when one life is drained to fill another with
poison,
Gorging a monster self with the sacrifice of its
neighbor.
Therefore I, who would injure none, nor be injured
of any,
Strictly resolve to tempt no soul into unblest re-
ceiving,
Neither mine own to debauch with the price of a
brother's destruction.

MUSIC

MUSIC

O DISEMBODIED soul of poesy!
O eloquence, but in an unknown tongue,
O shape of beauty in a mirror seen,
Which, hearing, I may never understand,
Which, worshipping, I yet may never clasp!
An echo of an antenatal life
Art thou, or pledge of glory yet to be,
Or both,— a rainbow bridge between this life
And that before and after, each unknown?

WINTER IS FLOWN

WINTER is flown
To the arctic zone,
 On his icy pinions drear;
And the glad Springtime,
With its blossoming rhyme
 And its breathing bloom, is here.

We know it has come,
For the wild bee's hum
 Is loud o'er the woodland flowers,
And the throstle pries
At the sleeper's eyes
 With a song in the darkling hours.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

Sweet, through the air,
As an answered prayer,
 A shower of perfume shakes;
And see, above,
Is it snow in love,
 Or the apple's blushing flakes?

Over the grass
Trips a blossom lass,
 As fragrant as the Spring.—
Now haste thee and hie thee,
But I will come nigh thee! —
 My song to the winds I fling.

SHELLEY'S BIRTHDAY

August 4, 2792

I stood before the iron gate of birth,
Where souls unborn await their doom to earth.
Forth from the throng there burst a soul of flame,
"Mine hour of birth, O Lord, the stars proclaim!"
To whom then gravely He: "Yea, now at last
The world is fit thy lot therein to cast.
But, through thy haste, a thousand years ago
Men called thee Shelley in that life below."

RUTH

RUTH

STRANGE in a familiar land,
I wandered sad and lone;
Thou laidst in mine a trustful hand,
In other years unknown,

And yet a link to bind me fast
(Lent surely from above!)
To the dear dead love of the past
And the sweet present's love.

RETURN TO THE MUSE

BACK to thine arms I fly, O Muse, consoler and
healer,
I who so long was debarred the way to thy strength
and thy solace;
Pillow my head on thy breast, forgetful of years and
of labors,
And, like a tired child, sleep, and smile in my slum-
ber;
Sleep, and awaken to sing of all that I dreamt on
thy bosom,
Truth and the substance of things, whereof this life
is but shadow.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

AFFINITY

Out of the eyeless dark,
With the plunge of passion freed,
A glimmer, a gleam, a spark,
A splendor white with speed,
That melts in its madding flight,
That flames with delayed desire —
And a meteor's heart of night
Throbs in the central fire.

WINTER SOLSTICE

UPON this day so icy-clear
Thou risest scarce too soon,
Thou longest night of all the year,
Led by the faint full-moon;
And beacons by the flame that floods
Yon palpitating west,
Above its burning brass, and woods
Low-darkening into rest.
Shine splendid with thy moon and stars,
Thine orbs of might and love;
Bright Hesper following sunken Mars,
And high-enthronèd Jove.

WINTER SOLSTICE

This is thy regal hour supreme;
Thou holdest earth in pawn.
Yea, boast thy flickering northern gleam
Reality of dawn.

Be strong; be all thyself; as though
Thy rule should last for aye;
Till earth deny the sun; even so.—
To-morrow dawns the day!

LATTER-DAY ART

THE good things long before our days
Have all been said or sung;
Our luckier elders stole our bays
While song and speech were young.
Art has no more her chosen ones,
Though many still are called;
We find ourselves her younger sons,
Our heritage forestalled.
It boots not how original
A work of ours may be,
Some pedant 's certain to recall
Who did the same B. C.
I suffer, and my sorrow's sting
Finds healing in a song,—
Your bookworm says my rendering
Does Pindar's lyric wrong.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

All arts in one complaint unite
Against their mightier dead;
Where'er we seek new paths, new light,
We follow where they led.
Deep in the marble's snowy breast
The Phidian shapes lie fixed;
The painter's fancy still is dressed
In hues Apelles mixed.
No less, Musician, in your sphere,
You find the same is true.
You steal from Mozart, do men sneer?
Truth is, he stole from you.
He stole from you your chance to sing
Into uncaptured ears;
Your right to claim the notes that spring
From depths below your tears.
We're tillers all in worn-out fields,
Mowers of aftermath.—
But no! the teeming earth still yields
Full harvest late as rath.
No morning ever dawned the same
As this that broke to-day;
No earlier springtide ever came
As danced the latest May.
The autumn last that crowned the year
With garnet and with gold
Had never its resplendent peer
In all the ages rolled.
The lover's open secret, learned
To-day the billionth time,

LATTER-DAY ART

Has never yet to ashes burned
The frankincense of rhyme.
And Freedom, martyred by the hands
That saved her yesterday,
New champions and new song demands,
More consecrate than they.
Nor, if our quickening faith is true,
That out of dust man rose,
And through the ages upward grew,
And still aspiring grows;
The ancient and the mid-world's eyes
Have not for all time seen,
Nor have their ears caught all that flies
Man's heart and heaven between.
And, though our dust not yet is fit
God's spirit to enfold,
The years are slowly purging it
Of kinship to the mold.
With every clearing of the sense,
Glories unknown before,
The rivers of God's immanence,
Into our being pour.
And every wave from heaven rolled
Must break with music new;
Say not, then, that the great of old
Have robbed earth's art from you.
Art is but life that finds its voice,
Of laughter or of tears;
Anew must man lament, rejoice,
Through all earth's changing years!

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

AURA

WRAPT in the breathing mist
Of love's divine perfume,
She trips to our stolen tryst
In all her pulsing bloom;

And I who have paced the sands,
Gnawn with a hundred fears,
Suddenly feel two hands
Clapped on my roaring ears.

No need to ask, "Who 's there?"
Or wait for her tingling kiss;
I know by the fragrant air
That only she it is.

EXPECTANCY

OH hush! Oh hist! Breathe low and list.
Incline thine ear, and softly hear.
Oh heed! Oh hark! Attend and mark.
The laughter of the year
Ripples from far anear.
The Spring, the Spring is here.

HILL STREET

HILL STREET

THIS is the street that long ago
Started gaily to scale the steep,
But, soon awearied, stumbling, slow,
Sank in the grass to sleep.

AT FOURSORE AND TEN*

'T is time to light the lamp; for threescore years
Have I gone in and out before my folk;
Five generations have beheld unbroke
My term of toil; but now mine eyesight blears,
Until the sacred text itself appears
Thick darkness as wherethro' Jehovah spoke.
His voice I hear; but, oh! the heavy stroke
Of darkness dims mine eyes; the long night nears.
To-day I buried one, a white old man,
Whom as a babe I christened at the font.
A new world jostles me; new faces scan
And know not mine; only the marble's front
Bears names I love; the night grows chill and damp;
'T is time to shut the doors, to light the lamp.

* Single pastorates of fifty and even sixty years were not unknown in New England as late as the nineteenth century. The Rev. Jacob Ide, of West Medway, is credited with one of over sixty-five years, 1814-1880.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE GODDESS OF DREAMS

IN more than mortal mold and stateliness,
One early loved revisits me in sleep;
No longer coy, and clogged by custom cheap,
But loving, as a god might stoop to bless,
And as a guardian angel's her caress,
When, in a voice like bells across the deep
Of mountain lakes, as forth her white arms leap
To clasp my neck, she cries with joyful stress,
Smiling: "Oh! art thou come again to us?
Dearest, why didst thou e'er from us depart?
Lo! we have loved thee ever." And my heart,
Fired by the embers of its passion thus,
Snaps the light thread of sleep, and, dolorous
With many a dim regret, mazed I upstart.

LOVE'S JUSTIFICATION

LOVE was banished by the gods
From their ever-blest abodes;
For he slew, in mortal duel,
Many with his arrows cruel,
While himself unwounded past,
And a laugh behind him cast.
Fleeing now he wandered wide,
Till he reached the forest-side,

LOVE'S JUSTIFICATION

Where, above Admetus' flocks,
Flashed Apollo's golden locks.
Told he to the god disguised
All his enterprise misprized,
Choked with tears of anger spoke,
And at last his arrows broke;
From his curvèd golden bow
Rent the cord and cast it low.
But Apollo caught the string,
Saying, "This shall justice bring;"
And across his rainbow shell
Drew it thrice and bound it well.
Soon before Jove's throne they stand,
Justice there for Love demand.
But the plea Apollo made
Was the strain his fingers played,
Plucking from the thrilling strings
Such persuasive quiverings,
Such an eloquence, it sent
A divine bewilderment
On the high-assembled gods,
And they cry, whereat Jove nods,
"Blest be Love, and here abide;
Love hath MUSIC justified!"

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE LOVE-SONG

It was the sweetest love-song
By mortal ever sung,
Through all the ages' passion,
Since Eden first was young.

The happy maid that heard it,
The youth who sang so well,
What was their time or country,
Or language, none can tell.

Forgotten is that music,
Its words can no one guess; —
We know that when it ended
Two kisses answered yes.

The first was self-surrender,
In melting sweetness poured;
The second, pride of capture —
Such was the song's reward.

CAUGHT

UNTAUGHT artist in swift glances,
Feigned retreats and masked advances,
Lighting momentarily thy face

CAUGHT

With some newer, subtler grace;
Webster of the magic net
Where my heart lies panting yet,
High and dry, securely landed; —
Yet might I be once remanded
To the joyous, breathing sea
Free from fear, and safe from thee,
Tricksy fisher after men,
Me thou shouldst not mesh again.—
Nay, thou smilest, still would I
So be captured, so to die.

YOUTH

TELL me, Muse of my birthplace, who pourest over
its gullies
Beauty and pathos more than are blended of aught
they embosom,
Crownest its hill-tops with strength and fervor and
inspiration,
Not to be seen in their granite bones or the scant
soil they prick through;
Fairy, that lovest to grace so much that else were
unlovely,
Paving with purest gold the dusty roads of our
childhood,
Spanning the home, the school, the village, the nar-
row vision,

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

As with a rainbow-arch of love and transfiguration;
What art thou, Unembraced, who greetest only in
parting,
Never disclosest thy face until we lose thee forever;
Say, what art thou but Youth, as potent present as
vanished,
Only unrecognized then, a joy whose well-spring
we knew not?
Suddenly greet us the days of dawning manhood,
whose pleasures
Sweetness gain from the salt of experience so un-
familiar
It is mistaken for gladness; before whose eyes in-
distinctly
Flutter thy hastening robes, while, framed on the
background of childhood,
Clear grow, and still more distinct, thy features
saddened by farewell,
Though the new thrill at our hearts is rhythmic
with earlier raptures.

LOWELL'S LETTERS

HEART of love! I close thy book,—
Whereon thyself didst never look,—
And say: The world, which deemed it knew
Lowell witty, wise, and true,
Guessed but half; who readeth here
As a lover holds him dear.

CELIA

CELIA

Who loved not Celia? When she died
I was so far away,
Her death was never real to me,
Its memory would not stay.

Even now, to see a face like hers
Will make my heart expand
With fancy it is hers indeed,
Touched only by Time's hand.

COMRADESHIP

TRULY as thou lovest me not,
That thou likest me well, I guess;
Yet I seek thy love no jot,
Nor would have thy liking less.

I could see, and not repine,
In another's hand thine own,
On his face thine eyebeams shine,
As on me they never shone.

Yet 't is passing sweet to see
Still thy smile renew the day.
So much then the happier he.—
Ah! but teach him still delay.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

PANSY

HEART'S-BLOOM, who loves not thee?
The waiting brown earth brightens for thee,
The hovering blue sky lightens for thee.—
Heart's-bloom, lovest thou me?

Heart's love, beauty will fade —
Though the sweet summer glideth from thee
True-love stedfast abideth for thee;
Heart's-love, be not afraid!

ERATO

HER very scorn and blame
Bring rapture without name.
No wonder none can sing
The joy her praises bring!

THE LAND

A LAND there lieth afar;
Would ye know of that land?
There shine sun, moon, and star
On wave and strand.

THE LAND

There bend the heavens blue
Or grey with cloud;
And the seasons four keep true
To their time allowed.

There trees by waters grow,
And meadows wind
Betwixt round hills and low
And the heights behind.

“But what of the marvels grand? —
These are common truth.”
But in *that* land — ah! in the land
Of my vanished youth!

ARMENIA

EUROPE, you gave yon blood-bathed Turk
The tools to work his murderer's work,
And now the red result you shirk.

You taught this Tamerlane your skill
Of steam to speed, of lead to kill,
Yet look to see unwrought his will.

Apostate to your holy trust
Of progress! Back into the dust,
Bleeding afresh, the Cross is thrust.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

O Europe, deaf to shriek and groan,
Read in Armenia's doom your own,—
Fire, blood, and rape, and hunger's moan.

THE SABINE FARM

On the death of Eugene Field

DUST are the dwellers of the Sabine farm,
And voiceless mold the trees that walled it round,
While, senseless to its old poetic charm,
An unremembering race now tills the ground.

Yet here the myrtle and the laurel bloom,
And maidens' blushes match the ripening grape;
Here echoes yet within its whispering gloom
Love's merry war, with capture and escape.

For though earth fain the Sabine farm would hide,
We still may tread its acres o'er and o'er,
With Horace for our host, and by his side
A new-come spirit from our Western shore.

HER WATCH

ON her warm breast that rascal ticker
Thrills with her heart-throbs day by day,
Nor ever beats one pulse the quicker —
Damn watches, anyway!

SEA-CHANGED

SEA-CHANGED

ALONG the ocean strand
The poet wandered free,
Glad of the singing land,
Glad of the speaking sea.

To all that came he sang,
And sang when none was nigh;
The hare to meet him sprang,
The lark dropped from the sky.

Up from their weedy rocks
The fishes gathered near,
And slumbering four-o'clocks
Awoke at noon to hear.

As glad as he to sing,
So glad all creatures heard,
Their joy twice joying,
Repeated in his word.

He sang how dawns descend
From cloud to sparkling hill,
From hill to streams that wend
Night-fragrant, black, and still.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

He sang how sunsets gild
The grass and gleaming wood,
While kindling clouds upbuild
New heavens o'er earth renewed.

He sang the noon-tide glow
Upon the ocean's breast,
The long-breathed ebb and flow,
The sails in flight and rest.

But, on a fateful day,
With lips of laughing cheer,
Unmindful of his way,
He wandered once too near;

And then, as not before,
The ocean's might he knew,
Which swept him far from shore,
Deep underneath the blue;

And when his eyes had seen
The shapes below that swarm,
Back to the sunny sheen.
The sea flung out his form.

But now his song is changed,
And listeners wonder why
His gaze, that whilom ranged
Joyous o'er earth and sky,

SEA-CHANGED

Is now with terror chilled,
And all his song should be
With shapes and dangers filled,
From the secret nether sea.

They bid him sing again
The songs they loved before;
But still a ghastly strain
His pallid lips outpour.

So, sadly they depart,
Till all at last are gone;
But, burdened still, his heart
Its lay of dread sings on.

New listeners now appear,
Who know the under deep;
As eagerly to hear
The hearts within them leap

As theirs who thronged of yore
To crown his carolled glee;
For these with joy live o'er
The terrors past at sea:

Drowning and storm and wreck,
The famine-frenzied raft;
Sea-fight, the slippery deck,
The shark that follows aft;

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

The galleons that sank
With all their silks and gold,
The rotting beam and plank,
The fleshless hands that hold.

Even the rock-fast land
Is but an isle (hear they),
With death on every hand
Straining for human prey.

Nor only death around,
But lightning leashed o'erhead
And earthquake underground
Lend his new song their dread.

Yet, whiles, a gleam of mirth
Will flash along his pain,
And glad the sorrowing earth,
Like summer come again.

But earth grieves not to know
His joy cannot abide;
The larger gift of woe
She gives her open-eyed.

SEA KINSHIP

SEA KINSHIP

So many strains of ocean blood
With breath of brine my veins inspire,
I know untaught the wild sea's mood,
The ship's mad will of wind or fire.

The viking on the shield-hung prow,
The wry Dutch beggar of the sea,
Britain's bluff tar, the Yankee brow,
World-fronting, all are part of me.

No wonder that my pulses leap
To greet the sea, as drawn from hers;
With every wave that ribs the deep
Some dim ancestral memory stirs.

LAMPMAN

UNDER the large, low, yellowing harvest-moon,
As homeward from my daily toil I wend,
Quaffing the keen air spiced with tinted leaves,
I think — and comradeship is in the thought —
That under this same moon, with head uplift,
Forgetful of his desk and drudgery,
Walks Lampman home like me, but meditating
What wizardry of world-compelling song!

October 19, 1896.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

MARCH

THE crested maple-buds glow red
In the golden young of the year,
As o'er the crisping crust I tread,
And through the grey boughs peer.

Half up the sky the moon hangs blanched,
Athwart the sun's low ray;
With shouts a kite is upward launched.—
Look, Heart, and laugh to-day!

EMULATION

O MISERABLE beyond all men to gaze
On such a work, and never feel the thrill
Of larger life tingling in brain and nerve
Till sense and thought the artist's fervor win.
You cringe and whimper like a beaten cur
Because your brush can trail no equal power.
Frank souls the proffered splendor freely take;
You starve in jealousy and self-despair.

Nay, thou beliest me. I was not born
To take art's gifts save from great Nature's hand.
My gain must come through giving. All I see
In others' work—my doom 't is, not my choice —

EMULATION

Is but the manner, sleight, and handicraft,
Wherethro' I better mine. Then think of me
As one who covets but another's skill
In serving men, not grudges them his gift,
Nor him his grace and glory of bestowing;
But, in my weakness, grieve I cannot bring
Than every gift always a kinglier.

MUSIC'S WAIF

To Frederick W. Bancroft, with sundry poems on Music

A WAIF outside the palace walls,
In dark and cold, but overstreamed
By somewhat of the mirth that falls,
By somewhat of the splendor gleamed;

Ragged and hungry and alone,
I peer and hearken till I win
So much of rapture else unknown,
I half misdeem myself within.

Take here the reckoning rudely scored
Of what I stole without your heed;
Belike some dim-suggested chord
Shall gain my pardon while ye read.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

DURESS

EYES of brown for hearts' undoing,
Snowy teeth for souls' beguiling,
Scarlet lips that shape my ruin,
Still so shyly, gently smiling!

Ah! how free I blindly entered,
Prisoned now beyond reprieving,
Here where Heaven and Hell are centered,
Bliss and torment past believing.

WÆS HÆL

To J. William Lloyd

'T is poets know a poet. Gold or earth
His proffered cup, not so they rate its worth.
Their single test and pledge of comradeship,
It bring true Hippocrene from fount to lip.

THE TRAIN

It thrills me when I see a child
Wave to a passing train.
It brings my own lost wondertide
Of childhood back again.

THE TRAIN

My heart throbs as I felt it then,
With awe and strange delight,
Exultant, yet afraid, so near
To Motion clad on Might.

THE EGOIST

In spite of sins, the new, the old,
In spite of blunders manifold,
I sink to sleep.
I would not have my sins forgiven;
The memory of my blunders, even,
I fain would keep.

For have they not been all a part
Of what I am in mind and heart
Impelled to be?
Let me from Life but amplier take
Good, bad, I care not, so it make
More, more of *me!*

REFORMERS *VERSUS* MAMMONITES

WE, where death-wounds drip,
Are serving the guns on deck;
They in the hold are scuttling the ship
For the chance to plunder the wreck.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

GHOSTS

WITHIN the old town's once familiar streets
Is more than wonted hasting to and fro;
A stranger to the multitude I go,
And strange to me is most my vision meets;
But more and more I lose the throng that cheats
My outward sense, and in their places grow
The forms, the looks, the tones I used to know,
And vanished doors invite where friendship greets.

Even so I wander, till at last I doubt
If I be he that's jostled of the throng,
And he and they be not a ghostly rout
Of shapes long hence to be, while full and strong
The tides of life surge in our veins who shout
In youthful sport, or nurse love's darling wrong.

NATURE

SHALL Nature flame her even and morn
For aye to man's neglect or scorn?
Speed forth her coursers of the day
That man may grime his life away?
Unroll her midnights from the deep
To soothe his toil-blurred eyes with sleep?
Ah! no, calm Nature's kindly plan

NATURE

Shall triumph even over man,
Her truant, thankless, wilful child,
Still from her side to loss beguiled.
He yet shall learn what Wisdom saith:
"Who turn from Nature walk with Death;
Who walk with Nature she instates
As gods on whom her Splendor waits."

FULNESS AND LACK

HE riddles the mark and the neighborhood
 With a Gatling gun;
I send one shot through the heart of the white,
 For I have but one.

MYSELF

SOMEWHERE, between the street and my bed,
I lost Myself in a storm of pain,
Which their drugs have turned to a fog of lead,—
 Oh! when shall I find Myself again?

Or, is it really I that am lost,
And Myself is somewhere, painless, free,
Its cloudless joyance only crossed
 By the wonder what has become of Me?

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

JUDGMENT-DAY

O THOU who man's heart madest and its needs,
And hope within it sowedst, as on meads
Of midnight heaven Thou dost nightly scatter
Of morn the seeds,—

Thou dost not overlook nor we forget
That, when the world for final doom is met,
Not only Thou man's judge, but he as truly
Shall Thine be set.

HEINE ON HIS DEATH-BED

From the German

WITHIN my breast I feel expire
Every worldly, vain desire;
Well-nigh from me too goes hence
The hate of evil, and even the sense
Of others' ills and of mine own —
And in me lives but Death alone.

The curtain falls, the play is o'er;
And, yawning, to its homes once more
My dear, good German public strolls.
They are not stupid, bless their souls!
Who sup to-night, content, and quaff

HEINE ON HIS DEATH-BED

Their little something, and sing and laugh.
He told the truth, that hero bold,
Who spake in Homer's book of old:
The pettiest Philistine, alive and busy
In Stukkert on Neckar, more blessed is he
Than I, dead hero, doomed to go
The lord of shades in the world below.

SUPERSTITION

SOPHUS, foe of superstition,
Marked a penny in derision.
But it dogged him evermore,
Pursued him to a foreign shore,
And, lastly, on his dying day,
Upon his sightless eye it lay.

ASSES

ALWAYS the asses in chorus denounce the poet's
arrival,
Drowning the voice of his music, drowning his
gathering praises.
Idle to answer them, vainer to scold them than
scolding the weather,
For they will always be with us, the asses, and
always be — critics.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE EXTREMIST

THUS beholds mankind the hearty lover and hater:
All his geese are swans, and all his turkeys are buzzards.

How he provokes us! Yes, but is n't he also refreshing?

SIR WALTER ON PUBLISHERS

BEWARE of them that invite and lunch and with courtesies follow you;
For they only mean to bite and crunch and finally swallow you.

WILLIAM WATSON

THIS gentle mount, its height we guess not true,
Its daisied slope so cheats the steps that climb,
Till, sky-enfolded, from its top we view
So neighborly yon huddling peaks sublime.

PERSONALITY

Is man's life One, or just a string of fractions,
A fitting file of objectless reactions?

THE RED ROSE

THE RED ROSE

O RED Rose, mad in your pride!
But, since you have pressed her side,
To my reeling sense you are
No rose, but a perfume-jar.

PSYCHE

So, when this dull and crawling carcase fails,
We enter the dark house with silver nails,
Thence to emerge, God knows what wingèd
splendor
That soars and sails.

AQUILON

THE wind is blowing from the North to-day;
And, far away,
Across the plunging sea,
Beyond the uplands' growing majesty,
Beneath the shadow of an out-thrust peak,
My soul would seek
A lake's white-crested blue,
And wash therein, and rise up sweet and new.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

And, O ye balmy Norland fir and pine,
Might ye combine,
With all the winds that teach
Your music to the waves upon the beach,
To heal my heart of ills that weigh it down,
Caught in the town,
Where every soundness flies
The tradesman's cheats, the office-monger's lies!

Ye winds and waves, ye woods and mountain-tops,
Before you drops
The veil that cities weave,
And men no longer doubt or half-believe,
But see, and feel, and their own being know
But just below
The spiritual height
Ye shadow forth, and thither us invite.

For ye reveal, by kindly shade o'ercasting,
The everlasting,
To which, beholding you,
Man pierces, and then knows his kinship true,
Not ye, in all your beauty and your pride,
But what ye hide,—
The Self beyond, above,
Whereto his own as to itself doth move.

AGITATORS

AGITATORS

PROTEST

FROM agitators, good Lord, us deliver!
You cannot mend things; why not let them be?

REPLY

One needs but stir a sand-bar in a river
And the swift current whirls it out to sea.

TYRANNY

“NECESSITY, the tyrant’s devilish plea;”
So Milton wrote before the world grew free.
But modern tyrants of the same complexion
Blast earth and man with impudent Protection.

TYRANNICIDE

THE menace of remote artillery
Thundering on his borders, clash and roar
Of nigher-drawn yet safely distant strife,
These daunt the tyrant not; they flatter him;
For is he not the point of all the stir?
Close as a dagger-thrust outleaps a word —

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

That voice the damned hear and then first de-
spair—
Of overlooked, unreckoned, waiting Truth,
And stark he lies forgot, a clod with clods.

IN THE FORTIES

*Written for the reunion of the class of 1880 in Colby College
June, 1900*

WE 'VE crossed the morning ridge,
The first divide;
Life's broad plateau we tread
With level stride.

Stilled are the matin songs,
And dried the dew;
The dusty roads of noon
Our feet pursue.

Manhood, with straining thews
And beaded brow,
Has been so many miles
Our yoke-mate now

That well-nigh we forget
What shifts he brings —
Toil's hobnail shoon for Hope's
Dædalian wings.

IN THE FORTIES

Oh! glorious flights we dreamed,
To reach the sun!
But here we plod, nor yet
Earth's heights have won.

Shall any there mid ice
Pluck immortelles?
And who shall faint below? —
No Sibyl spells.

In vain we strive to pass
The bounds of Fate;
But, blind, we bleeding strive,
As early, late.

Yet, who would know his weird,
And cease to strive?
The strain 't is, not the gain,
That makes alive.

I've thought, might but I see,
Wrought by my hand,
Some work that I could deem
Had power to stand,

Then could I say to Death:
Come, take thy prey;
My better part shall still,
Despite thee, stay.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

But all my works to Death
Appointed are,—
The lump, the clod I shaped,
And meant a star,—

Failures foredoomed! which glad
To Death I cast.
Not what I wrought, but what
I sought shall last.

We fight in cloud and gloom,
Nor, stumbling, know
Whether we yield our ground
Or drive the foe.

Oh, blest are they for whom
Outbreaks the sun,
Revealing foe in flight,
A kingdom won!

But blest they too that fall,
Nor triumph see.
The true man's grave is Truth's
Thermopylæ!

REALISM

REALISM

REALISM, romanticism — 't is of the artist, not the art.

Let him work in either, neither, so his best he best impart.

ANGLO-SAXONDOM

Now the two nations that of all the earth
Have championed Freedom's cause with deepest
vows —

For Heaven sends Freedom champions in her
need —

Start to behold before their very eyes
The ogre visage, wet with human blood,
Of gorged, insatiable Tyranny.
Yet each but looks upon the other's face.

February 11, 1900.

IMPOTENCE

THE critic snarl at the Maker, what has it ever
meant

But the jealousy of the Potent on the part of the
Impotent?

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

SPEECH

WHOSO has aught to say,
The world will finally hear.
Whoso has naught to say,
The world will not hearken long.
Whoso knows how to say,
To give to the soul of thought
The perfect body of speech,
The world shall cherish his words
For the glow and the grace of the form
When the spirit has long been fled.

ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN

'T is not for him we miss that I
Walk sorrowing as one accurst
Beneath the blue of this March sky;
Not him I mourn, whose soul now first
New toils as ample satisfy.

Our loss I weep,—the glowing heart,
The crystal thought, the seraph tone,
Which thrilled us to a finer part,
A loftier strain we thought our own,
So subtle was his mastering art.

March 22, 1900.

FULFILMENT

FULFILMENT

FROM earliest boyhood ever haunted me
Visions of beauty, wonderment, or awe,
Like that when from the hill-road first I saw,
Startled, the blue, illimitable sea;
Or moonless midnight hung with mystery
Of stars and void; or dawn above the snow,
And all the west, with dream-dark pines below,
One red rose paling with expectancy;
Or the brown brook that o'er the birch-root sang,
While I lay listening, fanned by twinkling shade.
At scenes like these, amid the city's clang
Have I for gladness wept, though unappayed.
But, knowing thee, I find that God had wrought
In them but gleams of one diviner thought.
July 1, 1900.

THE WORLD-POEM

LAST night as I lay on my pallet,
A vision gathered before me —
For of night are the stars and the visions —
A mighty poem it pictured,
That should bind the past to the future
As with a bridge for men's travel,
Built o'er the wavering present,

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

Like Xerxes' bridge of vessels,
Binding to Europe Asia:
The poem that yet shall be written;—
Might I be endowed to write it!
But scarcely had I beheld it,
That highway of man's progression
Out of the clinging shadow,
Across the flickering present,
Into the sunlit future,
Ere I could grasp and fix it,
The baffling vision scattered,
Like Xerxes' wave-dashed barges,
And blank I lay on my pallet,
Open-eyed upon darkness.

SPECIALISTS

THEY grind, they grind, their grist they grind;
But whether meal or chaff they bind,
And whether God's or Devil's kind,
They never ask, they never mind,
Nor look above, before, behind,
But only down, and grind and grind.
I think that first their hearts they grind,
And then their brains, till only rind
Of men is left, that, deaf and blind
As any quern from block designed,
Sole joy can find to grind and grind.

SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE

GOD led the soul of Shakespeare into Life's dim
hall

And said, "Thy task shall be a window here to
build."

Shakespeare obeyed, and glad a window lifelong
wrought

More glorious far than any built therein before.

But yet, with all his power to gild the sunset's gold,

To lend the rose a blush, the violet a bloom,

In glass that drank the light, the window that he
built,—

So vastly more his power to rend the wall of dark

Than to fill up the gap with hues his fancy dyed —

It barely fills a corner of the rent he made,

Wherethro' men look unscreened out on the In-
finite.

NATURE'S HEART

WHEN Nature shapes our clay awry,

To folly dooming us, or crime,

Without a sigh she flings us by

For "better luck next time!"

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

UGG THE DWARF

“My mother cursed my life unborn,
My father trampled my life unborn,
Hunger and nakedness, cuffing and scorn,
Have been my life,” mumbled Ugg the Dwarf.

“You will die and your straight limbs rot,
And ere they rot you shall be forgot;
But a monument shall be built to me
As high as my father’s gallows-tree;
And men shall look and bless my name
For a thousand years with a hero’s fame.”
So hissed the dwarf as he shambled along
And mowed at the mock of the pointing throng.

This is what the watcher saw
When he gained the height above the Pass:
Two furious hosts together draw
In a madding race for the grim crevasse.
And the host of the tyrant faster flew;
A gold-haired princeling rode at its head.
They will win, they have won; like thunder grew
Their shout of triumph, as on they sped.

Nothing now can stay their course,
And Freedom, the Beast, shall die from the world.
From the dust at the head of the prince’s horse

UGG THE DWARF

A shape leaps up and a cloak is whirled.
He rears! He falls with his rider to ground.
Back! Back! 'T is the Prince! and front and rear
Their ranks in a climbing crash confound,
And a hundred helmets disappear.

On! On! to the Pass! But the Pass is filled,
And down on the stunned and wavering foe
The ranks of Freedom, tiger-willed,
Leap, and his pride in the dust is low.
His pride and power in the dust lie low,
In the tyrant's halls are mourning and fear;
But the wondering victors joy to know
That Freedom is safe for a hundred year.

Then the watcher came down his tale to tell,
And they searched among the heaped-up dead
Till they found, where the prince's charger fell,
A something, shapeless and trampled and red.
As a sacred thing they raised it high
On a shield, and, veiled with cloth of gold,
Four chieftains bore it, that every eye
Might look, and the tale thereafter be told.

That is why in the city square
Four tall spearmen, straight as light,
Of brown-green bronze, on a shield upbear
A something, golden-draped from sight.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

PROMINENCE

WHEN a moral ground-swell sweeps
Through a nation's hidden deeps,
Who ride foremost, highest climb?
Sticks and weeds and froth and slime.

PLEASURE

CYNIC

WHAT wilt thou do, thou fool of sense,
Thou slave of passion, when youth is hence,
When power shall fly thee, and even desire
Shall fail as for want of draught a fire?

CYRENAIC

Why, then, like the heart of June that is filled
With raptures hour by hour sun-spilled,
When pleasures fade, o'er my darkening day
Shall the afterglow of their memory play.

CONSEQUENCE

My brother, caught by the volcano's frown,
Sees on his noon the night of death shut down;
I, half a year and half a world away,
Smile, as from rose to violet dies the day.

A SPIRIT IN BONDAGE

A SPIRIT IN BONDAGE

—No, he is twenty-five;
And I, for the first five years, was the happiest
woman alive.
My Raymond! I was so proud of his body stalwart
and straight,
His ruddy cheeks, his dancing curls, and early and
late
His eyes that looked into mine straight out of his
loving heart;
While “mother” he sought already to shield as a
being apart.
Then came that dreadful day when I lost my boy
from my sight,
Never to call me again, to kiss me and clasp me
tight.
Now I can speak of it all. I had been away from
our home.
Raymond stood at the window, watching for me to
come.
He saw me and rushed to meet me, his hair stream-
ing out in a cloud.
He smiled when his eye caught mine, and I watched
him, smiling and proud.
That was our last look together; it was just as he
crossed a street;
For next he was lying senseless behind a runaway’s
feet.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

He lived. I knelt in the street and gave God thanks
for his life.
Then followed weeks of watching, when strange,
new fears grew rife,
As I sat by my boy, and never could win from his
eyes a sign
Of the look they had worn, but always a stranger's
glance met mine.
Then they told me — I *would* know the truth —
that I should not have him again,
That his soul had gone with the blow, and only its
husk would remain;
Nor even the body be his, manly, o'errunning with
health,
But a dwarf's, which would never know manhood,
a creature of mischief and stealth.
Then a deadly sickness fell on me, but I lived — to
renew my grief.
Then I prayed — God forgive me — for *his* death;
it seemed the only relief.
But he lived, and grew stronger and daily more
elvish, until, I confess,
My love, which had never been *his*, grew faint in
the strain and the stress.
I feared I should hate him, and, weeping, I prayed
for strength and for grace,
As I knelt by his sleeping form, with its wizened and
altered face.

A SPIRIT IN BONDAGE

And still my burden grew sorer. But one night I
dreamt a dream.
You shall hear it and judge if it dealt with things
that are or but seem.
I stood in another world, that stretched overpower-
ingly vast,
And was filled with glorious angels, but all were
hushed and o'ercast.
Then I was aware of their trouble, for an eighth
of the Universe
Had refused to accept of life, and lay as if under a
curse.
Seraph on seraph had ventured, and fused his be-
ing with pain
Into its barren clods, but all their effort was vain.
Then through the stricken host there ran a gather-
ing thrill:
“*He* can succeed at last, for he has bowed his will
To the lowest bondage of dust, and he has learned
in the school
Of the highest love how love over lifeless matter can
rule.”
Then, high o'er the shimmering surge of that throng
as of a sea,
A seraph shape blazed forth, and all cried, “It is
He!”
And I looked on his face, and lo! his eyes sought
out my own.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

They were my Raymond's eyes, the eyes I once had
known;

But all so filled with love and gratitude and pride
Immortal, measureless, that in my sleep I cried,
"Raymond!" and so awoke, shattered with tears of
joy.

You cannot now think strange my patience with my
boy.

God spoke to me. This faith no words of man can
shake.

For, when God speaks, the soul needs not to ask
who spake.

THE SUM OF ART

WHAT is Art's beginning and end?
The earth-god's arrows back to send.

Is it not to lighten the world
With flaming shafts from our bowstrings hurled?

Is it not to slay the Ill
With the arrowy shower of our wit and skill?

No; it is only to answer back
With Life's own weapons Life's attack.

OUT OF SCHOOL

OUT OF SCHOOL

SWEET schoolmate, in our dulness, as we conned
The baffling pages, we did not espy
That thou hadst learned thy lessons, and thine
eye
Was wandering from the room to scenes beyond.
Out through the open door green meadows fond
Smiled on thee, and a thousand flowers waved
nigh,
And through the open window lured the sky
With song of birds. Why shouldst thou not re-
spond?

So, ere we knew, we saw thee at the door
Smiling, with wave of hand. Now in the room
Thrice uglier seem the walls, darker the gloom,
Emptyer our tasks. But yet a little more,
We, too, released from desk and dingy lore,
Shall hasten forth to join thee 'mid the bloom.

December 16, 1900.

HELEN GROVER CAREY

1875-1900

O TALL, white lily, broken by the blast,
Brief was thy bloom; long shall its memory last.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE POWERS THAT ARE GOING TO BE

A song for all reformers

LET others honor the powers that are,
And burn them incense and bend the knee;
I bow to the more tremendous powers,
The Powers that are going to be;
The awful powers of the Future's hours,
The Powers that are going to be.

The powers that are, behold! they wane,
Their glory sinks to the western sea.
Then hail to the mightier powers that rise,
The Powers that are going to be;
The stars that climb the sky, sublime,
The Powers that are going to be.

Ye powers that are, for all your pomp,
Ye hang like leaves on a wintry tree;
But under your withered splendor swell
The Powers that are going to be;
The buds that shall bloom and fill your room,
The Powers that are going to be.

Yea, boast in your pride that wind and tide
Are bound to work but your will's decree; —
Behold! your conquerors landward steer

THE POWERS THAT ARE GOING TO BE

The Powers that are going to be;
And your wrath but avails to swell the sails
Of the Powers that are going to be.

FUIT HOMO

“HAD they but known!” The Seraph sighed,
As he leant on Mercury’s glowing rim,
And looked across at the full-orbed Earth,
Whereon the last of men had died,
A puny savage, grovelling dim,
’Neath skies that smiled on Plato’s birth.

“Had they but known, they had surely willed;
But their eyes were holden, or hardened their
hearts;
And a race on its way to the gods, we thought,
Set in a garden with bounty filled,
Which had mastered one by one Life’s arts,
On a sudden lusted for Death, and was naught.

“Why they failed, none understand,—
In a world, the jewel of the skies,
With soul-stuff strong to climb from the sod,
Till it built life new under Shakespeare’s hand,
Till it measured mind with Kant’s clear eyes,
Till it mirrored in Jesus the heart of God.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

“We only know that man sank and shrank,
Till the steam of slaughter, the sweat of the slave,
Again made him incense merry and sweet;
And Art, which had nourished him, died, and it
stank;
And knowledge found in division its grave;
And, naked, man starved at an idol's feet.”

LETTING IN THE JUNGLE

STILL under starch of culture
Beats the heart of the savage.
After all, we are cave-men,
Only polished a little;
Still are we cannibal flint-men,
Only tutored a little;
Praying to rain-god and war-god,
Offering still to our idols
Sacrifice brute and human,
Only varied a little.

Measuring progress by lifetimes,
Far off seems the gorilla.
Ah! but heredity clogs us,
Hampers us, hopples and tethers.
So, at the heels of the modern,
Lurks the primordial slayer;
Step by step with the Christian
Steals the avenging assassin.

LETTING IN THE JUNGLE

What is the task of the poet,
The prophet, the seer, the teacher?
What is it less than to stifle
The ape in civilized bosoms,
To tame the pitiless cave-man,
To quell the thug and the berserk;
Ay! and to lure men onward,
Making our highest attainment
Seem but a point in the stone-age?
Such is forever and ever
The task of the singer and seer.

What shall we say when a singer,
Dowered with the lyre of enchantment,
Tunes it unto the pulses
We draw from primitive murder,
Blinding the eyes of the millions
With blood of the foretaste of slaughter;
Yea, till a thousand mill-wheels
Leap with the freshet of slaughter?

Still round the circle of brightness
Made by the blaze of our watch-fires
Set is the darkness with eyeballs
Glaring into the firelight,
Set with the fangs of hunger
Straining, checked by the firelight.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

What shall we say when a poet,
Having kindled his watch-fire,
Making a light in the darkness,
Gathered the folk to its shelter,
Suddenly leaps on the embers,
Stamps them out into darkness,
Letting the fangs of hunger
Loose on the folk that he guarded?
Lo! the wolf and the tiger,
Everywhere gathering courage,
Scorning the light and its watchers,
Everywhere bold in the firelight
Ravening sleepers and watchers; —
Everywhere under the midnight
Roaring and screams, and then silence.

This did a single poet;
So he wrought with his ballads;
Such the fruit of his singing!
All the poets beside him,
All have been sons of the morning,
Children of light, but him only.
He alone loved the darkness,
Hated the light, and, so minded,
Let in the creatures of darkness.
Wherefore, lest we forget it,
Let us publish his treason,
Blazoned in fiery letters,
Unto the bounds of the heavens.

LETTING IN THE JUNGLE

Wherefore, lest we remember
The name he bore and we honored,
Even for sake of our homage,
Yea, for our love, let our tear-drops
Quench it clean from the record.

February 3, 1901.

HONESTY

WHY should I starve to make men honest ware?
Why not curse God and die — a millionaire?

IN TIME OF ECLIPSE

'T is morning, without a cloud.
Do mine eyes from the brightness ail,
Or does the strong sun fail,
By an inroad of darkness cowed?
The midnight conquers amain;
And there falls with the dark a chill.—
Great God! is the sweet sun slain?
The creatures of daytime flutter and flee,
The screaming night-kind prowl and kill;
The stars look down in awe.
Is the day forever dead?
Is earth henceforth to be
For the creatures of beak and claw?
How shall the portent be read?

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

'T is not night come again.
'T was only sent us to show
Who are the creatures of mirk,
Where they harbor and lurk.
See! the sun's rim aglow
With gleams of the day returned.
The owl and the panther slink away;
But we know them now, and have learned
The haunts where they hide from the day,
Hushed in thicket and den.

March 10, 1901.

AGLAIA

SLUT o' th' Ashheap, Slut o' th' Ashheap,
Standing at the door and listening,
One I wot of, sad-eyed, sleepless,
Who would give, yes, half his kingdom,
Might he see thee as I see thee,
Tiptoe, barefoot, in the kitchen.

Thin thy dress, and scant and ragged;
Rose and pearl thy limbs glow through it.
But for the round breast's quick heaving
O'er the left-hand pressing tightly,
I could deem thee but a statue
With a tattered cloth flung round it,
Teasing us with half-disclosure.

AGLAIA

In thy right hand hid behind thee
Gleams the tiny crystal slipper.
Was it hard, thy three days' waiting,
All the guessing and the gossip,
And the search, that now is ending
Here so near thee, and — without thee?

“Slut o’ th’ Ashheap? ’T were an insult
To your Grace for us to call her.
She is dirty, ragged, ugly,
Splay-foot, sprawling; she would stumble
But in stepping through the doorway.
See, your Grace, the search is useless.”
“Nay, my lords, were she a harpy
I must see her for my oath’s sake,
Not for hope, ah me! —

“Aglaiā!

Grace of all the golden Graces,
Wouldst thou break my heart with hiding?
O Aglaiā, rose of evening,
Lily of the fragrant morning,
Now I clasp thee, kiss thee, keep thee;
Not a fay to flee at midnight,
Not a ghost to fade at morning,
But a woman, breathing, blushing,
Warm, and all mine own forever!”

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

THE SUPREMACY OF SONG

THE desert knows no music-fluttered tree,
No grass-fringed brook, no rainbow-charmèd
surge;

The prairie dreams not how the mountains merge
Their tops in heaven, though yet may they not see
The loving prairie's large serenity;

Confusions fierce the city-dweller scourge,
Yet, in the forest's hush as fiercely urge
Men's human hearts from lonely calm to flee.

Some lack in all! Yet is our sorrow vague;
But were a land of plains and mountain snows,
Rivers and seas, cities and forests deep,
A land wherein no poet's song arose,
And were that land our own, not war nor plague
Could draw such tears as we for shame should
weep!

APRIL SHOWERS

APRIL showers
Through barren hours
To piney bowers
Bring May flowers.

APRIL SHOWERS

And April beams
And sunny gleams
To dancing streams
Bring golden dreams.

New stir and sound
Glad April ground
Till Earth, late bound,
With joy is crowned.

And young Love starts
And whets his darts,
And thrilling hearts
Now feel their smarts.

LES REVENANTS

WHITE on the college roofs the moonlight sleeps,
Above the drooped and slumbering heads below;
Save here and there some brain too deep aglow,
Or laggard wit perforce, late vigil keeps.
But nightly sees the moon a throng that sweeps
Of dream-freed sprites from far and long ago,
Who leap at sports forgot, or, footing slow,
Build castles that have long been crumbling heaps.

Where perfumed sleep brings furrowed brows un-
rest,
A boyish form flits o'er the city's pave,

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

To seek yon willow walk; while, on like quest,
Flies a bronzed missioner's lone spirit brave
In day-dream from swart skins, and, arm close
pressed
On shoulder, watch the twain that glittering wave.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN KOOPMAN

1877-1901

In his scholar's gown he lies,
His face to the sunny April skies,
Master of Life's last mysteries.

Well it was to sink to rest,
Once again her "Babe," and pressed
On the heart that loved thee best.

In the old town by the bay,
Thy birthplace, now thy home for aye,
Sleep the unheeding years away.

Haply till the fiftieth year
They shall come that hold thee dear,
Breathe thy name, and drop a tear.

Then, when these are gone, at last
Thou shalt sink into the vast
Oblivion of the primal past;

WILLIAM FRANKLIN KOOPMAN

With the mighty men of yore,
Sage and bard and conqueror,
And the loved late gone before.

Meanwhile Earth shall spin its round,
Wonders rise and fames be crowned,
And truth and love gain slowly ground,

But surely, as the world shall pace
Toward the fulness of the race,—
The goal that lit afar thy face.

Where the granite ridges run,
'Twixt the sea and setting sun,
Brother, sleep! thy work is done.

THE KING'S SON OF ARR

THE king's son of Arr has wandered lone;
At the brow of a cliff he leans on the stone.
He looks across the valley lands,
Across the vale to the white sea sands,
Beyond the sands o'er the broad blue sea,
And deep unto his heart speaks he:

“To my Love or my Father shall I be true?
The will of my King or my Heart shall I do?
Shall he that gat me be obeyed,

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

Or Love that me immortal made?
Shall I be king's son, king one day,
Or first myself, then Love's for aye?"

He watched the wrinkled waters wend
Till the sky shut down, nor yet was the end.
Long time he gazed, then said at last:
"The future is greater than the past.
The king's I was; I am now mine own;
And Love has made the Earth my throne!"

THE HEART

OPPRESSED with so much joy,
With so much sorrow,
How should the heart not break
Before the morrow?

And oh, the myriad morrows
Earth shall number!
But one heart shall their fulness
Not encumber.

Pillowed on silence, folded
Eons deep,
While morrows morrows trample,
It shall sleep.

TO THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN AFRICA

TO THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN AFRICA

WHEN the last Boer has been cornered, and you
clamber to his corse

O'er the hundreds of your bravest he has slain,
And you plant the flag of England, sans fear and
sans remorse,
To flutter undefied o'er hill and plain;

When Peace you have established—in ashes of the
farms,

Freedom — to the jackals with your dead,
Prosperity — to plunderers, who called you first to
arms,
Why, then your work is done, and you are sped.

You can then go back to England for your pudding
and your praise;

But the England that you knew in other years —
You will never find that England, though you seek
it all your days,
Though you search for it with agony and tears.

The Mistress of the Ocean has sunk, no more to
rise;

The Arbitress of Nations none obey;
And she that led the leaders in humanity's emprise
Has fallen, and another shows the way.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

The Past's, the Future's England is nowhere to be
found,—

Once our pledge of the progress of the race;
And who has wrought this wonder? It is you on
Afric ground;

That corpse ye slew, go look,— 't is England's
face!

December 22, 1901.

CORONATION DAY

O ENGLAND, that discrown'st thyself to-day,
Thou storm-winged eagle towering in the skies,
Dreadless, with Freedom's lightning in thine eyes!
Thou glorious angel bursting from the clay,
Oppression's darkness with thy glance to slay!
Thou window on the night that dost surprise
With far-sent ray the nations lost in lies,
Illuming for them Freedom's only way!—

Or were the visions not of thee, thy seers,
Immortal Milton, Shelley, Morris, won?
Did Pym and Hampden plead in strangers' ears?
Was Bright an alien, Gladstone not thy son?
And thou canst grasp a shadow, safe from fears
To lose th' eternal substance, having none!

August, 1902.

VOLTAIRE'S DEATH-RIDE

VOLTAIRE'S DEATH-RIDE*

THROUGH the night, through the dead of the night,
who hieth,

With rattle of hoofs and rumble of wheels ?
'T is a coach and six that darkling fieth,
But the face of the rider no ray reveals.

Against the gloaming that died in heaven
The spires of Paris had sunken low,
And the gleam of the city's lamps on the even
Sank like a tardier afterglow.

'T is the birthnight of summer. The air is freighted
With odor of watching or slumbering flowers,
And amid the grass by the dewdrops weighted
The glow-worms flit in their sparkling bowers.

In downward sweeps the bats are skimming,
With creak of wings, aloft, alow,

* The incident which has here been freely handled is narrated in Parton's "Life of Voltaire" substantially as follows: Voltaire died in Paris, May 30, 1778. His relatives, fearing that he would be denied burial as a heretic, obtained a hasty permission for his interment at Romilly on the Seine, about a hundred miles east of Paris. But fearing also that if his death became known their plans might be interrupted, they dressed the body like a sick man travelling to his country-seat, placed it in an imposing carriage drawn by six horses, and left Paris at nightfall. At noon of the next day, June 1, the carriage, with another following, which contained the relatives of the deceased, reached Romilly, where the body was buried in a vault under the abbey church.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

And the nightingale her thicket is brimming
With raptures, none knoweth of joy or woe.

Through the night, through the dead of the night,
 who speedeth,
Withouten speech, withouten stay,
Nor the city's glow and gladness heedeth,
But flies o'er the misty marsh away?

Onward with equal pace he urges,
Under the dim crag's beetling frown,
And where the milky starlight merges
Into the night the oaks shut down.

Doth some gallant here ride belated,
The wish of his fiery heart to gain?
Some marquis, with winter's pleasure sated,
Off to his chateau in green Champagne?

Is it some felon fleeing the scaffold?
Or one whom Holy Church eyeth askance,
Who thought and fain would speak, but, baffled,
Seeketh a freer soil than France?

Belike some sick man vainly follows
The phantom of health he once let pass.—
Tight-shut rolls the coach through the chilly hol-
 lows,
And yet no breathing dims the glass.

VOLTAIRE'S DEATH-RIDE

Within, a form sits muffled, eery,—
Can it be? — Yes, full of scars,
After a wide world saved, grown weary,
A conqueror returns from the wars.

His fourscore years' campaign is ended,
And now he passes in swift review
The ancient scenes with his glory blended,
The fields of his daring and conquest new.

Is this the Romilly road? How solemn
And white beneath the slant moon throng
Arch and tablet and shaft and column
Beside the coach as it whirls along!

As name to name in the moonlight flashes,
A thrill through a dead man's heart would shoot,
And flames leap up through his memory's ashes
In charge and contest and pursuit.

Here in rout fled Superstition;
Here knelt Prejudice, cowed at last;
Tyranny, beaten, made here submission;
Here in its trenches rotted Caste.

Deep in flowers four crosses planted
Lift their tear-wet names to sight,
"Byng," "Calas," "Sirven," "Lally"; daunted,
The night slinks off and leaves them bright.

AT THE GATES OF THE CENTURY

Yon pile that ghosts the owl and raven,
Nor finished, though dwarfing roof and tree,
Heralds, in letters lightning-graven,
To all the world, "America Free!"

Fragrant from unseen hands are falling
Wreath upon wreath o'er all the way,
And voices above, around, are calling:
"The greatest of them that have worn the bay!"

Long is the midnight past, but he stays not;
His back to the sunset, still he flies,
As one assured that the Sun delays not,
Still facing where it *ought* to rise.

Whither now leads the road? Here daisies
Bloom o'er the Bastille's trampled pride;
Yonder a shaft its legend upraises:
"Here of envy Miracle died."

Another, "Here fell War, self-stricken";
Another, "Here men ceased to hate."
Yon fields of lies with corn-blades quicken,
O'er the mounting way shines the Dawn elate.

"Here men began to love one another."
High on a cross the words glow clear.
Traveller of Night, deliverer, brother,
Rest thou! The Morning finds thee here.



